

Professional Standards Grant

GOALS *Certificate of Excellence*: Q & A

Q: What if the training I complete includes more hours than the GOALS certificate requires? For example, if a Local Foods/ Farm to School class counts as 3 training hours, but the certificate I am working toward requires 2 hours, can that extra hour count toward another training topic?

A: The short answer is no. The required training hours listed for each individual track (director, manager, staff) are the *minimum* requirements. Extra training may credit toward the required, annual professional standards training hours, but do not credit as additional training hours for GOALS. The purpose of GOALS is to provide nutrition professionals with well-rounded knowledge of the USDA School Nutrition Program requirements. The hope and expectation for the GOALS certificate holder is that he or she will continue to obtain training to enhance his or her knowledge base beyond what is minimally required.

Q: I have a degree in nutrition. Do I still need to take all of the training to obtain a GOALS certificate?

A: Individuals with accredited training in a related area may have fewer requirements for a GOALS certificate. For example, a Registered Dietitian (RD) who submits her transcripts from an accredited technical school may not have to complete Nutrition 101, since her transcript shows her extensive training in nutrition. However, if she has not worked in school nutrition, she would still be required to complete Meal Pattern, Child Nutrition Basics, and other training specific to USDA Child Nutrition Programs. Please refer to the Short Track ([add the link](#)) for more information.

This also applies for individuals with several years of school nutrition experience without formal training in nutrition. In this case documentation such as a resume to show experience in the school nutrition field would be required when applying for Short Track.

Q: Will previous training certificates count toward GOALS?

A: Training certificates obtained in specific subject matter during the past 5 years may count toward the GOALS certificate. You should track and submit the certificates with the GOALS application for review. Because the GOALS criteria is based on current USDA requirements for the Child Nutrition Programs, it is possible that some previous training may not count toward GOALS.

Q: A training I already attended is not on the list. Does it count toward GOALS?

A: It depends. Training that is informative rather than subject based will not count toward GOALS. Training sessions such as Pre-Review Workshops, Great Beginnings Academy, and What's New calls provide program updates and overviews rather than comprehensive training on specific subject matter. These trainings will count toward the annual USDA professional standards training requirements but will not count toward the certificate. DPI is working to ensure that future training will include information on how the training credits for GOALS.

Q: Do I have to attend face-to-face School Nutrition Summer Development Courses (SNSDC) to obtain the certificate or can I complete the requirement with an online equivalent?

A: Some face-to-face SNSDC training is required. The GOALS certificate is endorsed by the Wisconsin State Superintendent of Schools, and face-to-face training provides the opportunity for an expanded learning experience that includes hands on activities, interaction with state agency staff, and the ability to ask questions for clear guidance. Required training includes Child Nutrition Basics, The Whole Enchilada (meal pattern training), and the Free, Reduced and Verification Process (director level only). Go to the training requirements webpage to see which courses require face-to-face training.

Q: Have the requirements for GOALS changed?

A: No. The requirements for a GOALS certificate have not changed. You may notice updates to the online documents "GOALS Training Hour Requirements". For example, the section on financial management is updated to consolidate training hours into a single course rather than several smaller course requirements.

Q: I think I have all of the training required for GOALS. How do I receive my certificate?

A: To apply for the GOALS certificate, access the online application on the GOALS webpage:

<http://dpi.wi.gov/school-nutrition/training/goal-oriented-achievement-learning-skills/how-to-apply>, follow the instructions, and submit the materials to GOALS@dpi.wi.gov.

Applications are processed in the order they are received. Please allow 4-6 weeks for processing. Certificates will be sent to the address listed in your Online Contract.

Q: Is there a time limit for obtaining a GOALS certificate?

A: No. Obtaining adequate training hours to earn a GOALS certificate will generally take at least a year, but may require several years, depending on each individual training plan. The expectation for GOALS is to obtain the training hours required to have a comprehensive understanding of USDA Child Nutrition Programs. Exceptions might be if applicants have trainings completed in the past five years and are submitting them as part of the application.

Q: Once I receive a certificate as a manager or staff member may I upgrade to a higher level?

A: Yes. If you obtain a staff or manager level certificate and would like to continue training to reach a higher certificate level that is acceptable and encouraged.